IN THE CLAIMS

Amend Claims 1, 6, 7, 12, 13, 17 - 21, 31, 35, and 39, cancel Claims 22 - 24, and add new Claim 61 so that the claims are as follows.

1. (Currently amended) A structure comprising:

an electron-emitting device which comprises a backplate and an array of laterally separated electron-emissive regions situated over the backplate, each electron-emissive region comprising at least one electron-emissive element;

a light-emitting device coupled to the electron-emitting device to form a hermetically sealed enclosure through which electrons emitted by the electron-emissive regions pass to strike the light-emitting device and cause it to emit light that produces an image; and

inert gas located in open space of the sealed enclosure, the inert gas consisting of at least one of (a) helium at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-5} torr and (b) ~~torr, (b) argon at a partial pressure of at least 3×10^{-5} torr, and (c)~~ at least one of neon, krypton, xenon, and radon at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-7} torr.

2. (Original) A structure as in Claim 1 wherein the structure is a flat-panel display.

3. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 1 wherein the light-emitting device comprises:

a faceplate; and

an array of laterally separated light-emissive regions situated over the faceplate, each light-emissive region situated opposite a corresponding different one of the electron-emissive regions.

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4. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 1 wherein the electron-emissive regions emit electrons according to field emission.

5. (Original) A structure as in Claim 1 wherein the inert gas comprises at least one of (a) neon at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-5} torr and (b) krypton at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-6} torr.

6. (Currently amended) A structure as in Claim 1 wherein the inert gas comprises at least one of (a) helium at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-5} torr, (b) neon at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-5} torr, (c) ~~argon at a partial pressure of at least 4×10^{-5} torr, (d)~~ krypton at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-6} torr, and (d) ~~(e)~~ at least one of xenon and radon at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-6} torr.

7. (Currently amended) A structure as in Claim 1 wherein the inert gas comprises at least one of (a) helium at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-4} torr, (b) ~~at least one of~~ neon ~~and argon~~ at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-5} torr, (c) krypton at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-6} torr, and (d) at least one of xenon and radon at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-6} torr.

8. (Original) A structure as in Claim 1 further including a getter for collecting non-inert contaminant material present in the sealed enclosure.

9. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 8 wherein the electron-emitting device has an active electron-emitting portion across which electrons are emitted from the electron-emissive regions, the getter being distributed across the active electron-emitting portion.

10. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 1 further including a reservoir for supplying further inert gas to the open space of the sealed enclosure.

11. (Original) A structure as in Claim 1 wherein the inert gas is at a partial pressure of no more than 1×10^{-1} torr.

12. (Currently amended) A structure as in Claim 1 wherein the inert gas comprises at least one of (a) helium at a partial pressure of no more than 1×10^{-1} torr, (b) neon at a partial pressure of no more than 5×10^{-2} torr, (c) ~~argon at a partial pressure of no more than 1×10^{-2} torr, (d)~~ krypton at a partial pressure of no more than 5×10^{-3} torr, and (d) ~~(e)~~ xenon or radon at a partial pressure of no more than 1×10^{-3} torr.

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13. (Currently amended) A structure comprising:

an electron-emitting device which comprises a backplate and an array of laterally separated electron-emissive regions situated over the backplate, each electron-emissive region comprising at least one electron-emissive element;

a light-emitting device coupled to the electron-emitting device to form a hermetically sealed enclosure through which electrons emitted by the electron-emissive regions pass to strike the light-emitting device and cause it to emit light that produces an image;

inert gas located in open space of the sealed enclosure at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-7} torr; and

a container that encloses inert gas, the container having a wall through which further inert gas passes from the container to the open space of the sealed enclosure ~~reservoir for supplying further inert gas to the open space of the sealed enclosure~~.

14. (Original) A structure as in Claim 13 wherein the structure is a flat-panel display.

15. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 13 wherein the light-emitting device comprises:

a faceplate; and

an array of laterally separated light-emissive regions situated over the faceplate, each light-emissive region situated opposite a corresponding different one of the electron-emissive regions.

16. (Original) A structure as in Claim 13 wherein the electron-emissive regions emit electrons according to field emission.

17. (Currently amended) A structure as in Claim 13 wherein the container is situated in ~~reservoir comprises a container that encloses inert gas, the container having a wall through which inert gas passes from the container to the open space of~~ the sealed enclosure.

18. (Currently amended) A structure as in Claim 13 ~~17~~ wherein the wall is gas permeable.

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19. (Currently amended) A structure as in Claim 13 ~~17~~ wherein at least part of the inert gas in the container is in gaseous form.

20. (Currently amended) A structure as in Claim 13 ~~17~~ wherein at least part of the inert gas in the container is in inert-gas compound form.

21. (Currently amended) A structure as in Claim 13 ~~17~~ wherein at least part of the inert gas in the container is present in inert-gas absorbent-material form.

22 - 24. (Canceled)

25. (Original) A structure as in Claim 13 further including a getter for collecting non-inert contaminant material present in the sealed enclosure.

26. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 25 wherein the electron-emitting device has an active electron-emitting portion across which electrons are emitted from the electron-emissive regions, the getter being distributed across the active electron-emitting portion.

27. (Original) A structure as in Claim 13 wherein the inert gas comprises at least one of (a) helium at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-5} torr, (b) at least one of neon and argon at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-5} torr, (c) krypton at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-6} torr, and (d) at least one of xenon and radon at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-7} torr.

28. (Original) A structure as in Claim 13 wherein the inert gas comprises at least one of (a) helium at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-5} torr, (b) at least one of neon and argon at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-5} torr, (c) krypton at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-6} torr, and (d) at least one of xenon and radon at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-6} torr.

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29. (Original) A structure as in Claim 13 wherein the inert gas is at a partial pressure of no more than 1×10^{-1} torr.

30. (Original) A structure as in Claim 13 wherein the inert gas comprises at least one of (a) helium at a partial pressure of no more than 1×10^{-1} torr, (b) neon at a partial

pressure of no more than 5×10^{-2} torr, (c) argon at a partial pressure of no more than 1×10^{-2} torr, (d) krypton at a partial pressure of no more than 5×10^{-3} torr, and (e) xenon or radon at a partial pressure of no more than 1×10^{-3} torr.

31. (Currently amended) A method of cleaning a structure comprising an electron-emitting device and a light-emitting device coupled to the electron-emitting device to form a hermetically sealed enclosure through which electrons emitted by an array of laterally separated electron-emissive regions of the electron-emitting device pass to strike the light-emitting device and cause it to emit light that produces an image, open space of the sealed enclosure containing inert gas consisting of at least one of (a) helium at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-5} torr and (b) ~~torr, (b) argon at a partial pressure of at least 3×10^{-5} torr, and (c)~~ at least one of neon, krypton, xenon, and radon at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-7} torr, the method comprising operating the electron-emitting device so that part of the electrons emitted by the electron-emissive regions collide with atoms of the inert gas to produce inert-gas ions which bombard contaminant material situated over the electron-emitting device in the sealed enclosure and cause at least part of the contaminant material to be dislodged from the electron-emitting device.

32. (Original) A method as in Claim 31 wherein the structure is a flat-panel display.

33. (Previously presented) A method as in Claim 31 wherein the electron-emissive regions are situated over a backplate of the electron-emitting device, each electron-emissive region comprising at least one electron-emissive element, the contaminant material attacked by the inert-gas ions comprising contaminant material situated over the electron-emissive elements.

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34. (Original) A method as in Claim 31 wherein the inert gas comprises at least one of (a) neon at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-5} torr and (b) krypton at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-6} torr.

35. (Currently amended) A method as in Claim 31 wherein the inert gas comprises at least one of (a) helium at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-5} torr, (b) neon at a

partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-5} torr, (c) ~~argon at a partial pressure of at least 4×10^{-5} torr, (d)~~ krypton at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-6} torr, and (d) ~~(e)~~ at least one of xenon and radon at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-6} torr.

36. (Original) A method as in Claim 31 further including collecting non-inert material, including particles of the dislodged contaminant material, present in the sealed enclosure.

37. (Previously presented) A method as in Claim 31 further including supplying the open space of the sealed enclosure with further inert gas.

38. (Original) A method as in Claim 37 further including collecting non-inert material, including particles of the dislodged contaminant material, present in the sealed enclosure.

39. (Currently amended) A method of cleaning a structure comprising an electron-emitting device and a light-emitting device coupled to the electron-emitting device to form a hermetically sealed enclosure through which electrons emitted by an array of laterally separated electron-emissive regions of the electron-emitting device pass to strike the light-emitting device and cause it to emit light that produces an image, open space of the sealed enclosure containing inert gas at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-7} torr, the method comprising:

operating the electron-emitting device so that part of the electrons emitted by the electron-emissive regions collide with atoms of the inert gas to produce inert-gas ions which bombard contaminant material situated over the electron-emitting device in the sealed enclosure and cause at least part of the contaminant material to be dislodged from the electron-emitting device; and

supplying the open space of the sealed enclosure with further inert gas <u>from a container having a wall through which the further inert gas passes from the container to the open space of the sealed enclosure</u>.

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40. (Original) A method as in Claim 39 wherein the structure is a flat-panel display.

41. (Previously presented) A method as in Claim 39 wherein the electron-emissive regions are situated over a backplate of the electron-emitting device, each electron-emissive region comprising at least one electron-emissive element, the contaminant material bombarded by the inert-gas ions comprising contaminant material situated over the electron-emissive elements.

42. (Original) A method as in Claim 39 further including collecting non-inert material, including particles of the dislodged contaminant material, present in the sealed enclosure.

43. (Previously presented) A method as in Claim 39 wherein the further inert gas supplied to the open space of the sealed enclosure compensates at least partially for inert-gas ions that lodge in the electron-emitting device.

44. (Original) A method as in Claim 43 further including collecting non-inert material, including particles of the dislodged contaminant material, present in the sealed enclosure.

45. (Original) A method as in Claim 39 wherein the inert gas comprises at least one of (a) helium at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-5} torr, (b) at least one of neon and argon at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-5} torr, (c) krypton at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-6} torr, and (d) at least one of xenon and radon at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-7} torr.

46. (Original) A method as in Claim 39 wherein the inert gas comprises at least one of (a) helium at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-5} torr, (b) at least one of neon and argon at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-5} torr, (c) krypton at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-6} torr, and (d) at least one of xenon and radon at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-6} torr.

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47. (Previously presented) A method as in Claim 31 wherein the light-emitting device comprises:

a faceplate; and

an array of laterally separated light-emissive regions situated over the faceplate, each light-emissive region situated opposite a corresponding different one of the electron-emissive regions.

48. (Previously presented) A method as in Claim 39 wherein the light-emitting device comprises:

a faceplate; and

an array of laterally separated light-emissive regions situated over the faceplate, each light-emissive region situated opposite a corresponding different one of the electron-emissive regions.

49. (Previously presented) A structure comprising:

an electron-emitting device;

a light-emitting device coupled to the electron-emitting device to form a hermetically sealed enclosure through which electrons emitted by the electron-emitting device pass to strike the light-emitting device and cause it to emit light that produces an image;

inert gas located in open space of the sealed enclosure at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-7} torr; and

a container that encloses inert gas, the container having a wall through which inert gas passes from the container to the open space of the sealed enclosure.

50. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 49 wherein the structure is a flat-panel display.

51. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 49 wherein the wall is gas permeable.

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52. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 49 wherein at least part of the inert gas in the container is in gaseous form.

53. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 49 wherein at least part of the inert gas in the container is in inert-gas compound form.

54. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 49 wherein at least part of the inert gas in the container is present in inert-gas absorbent-material form.

55. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 49 further including a getter for collecting non-inert contaminant material present in the sealed enclosure.

56. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 55 wherein the electron-emitting device has an active electron-emitting portion across which electrons are emitted from the electron-emitting device, the getter being distributed across the active electron-emitting portion.

57. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 49 wherein the inert gas comprises at least one of (a) helium at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-5} torr, (b) at least one of neon and argon at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-5} torr, (c) krypton at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-6} torr, and (d) at least one of xenon and radon at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-7} torr.

58. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 49 wherein the inert gas comprises at least one of (a) helium at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-5} torr, (b) at least one of neon and argon at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-5} torr, (c) krypton at a partial pressure of at least 2×10^{-6} torr, and (d) at least one of xenon and radon at a partial pressure of at least 1×10^{-6} torr.

59. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 49 wherein the inert gas is at a partial pressure of no more than 1×10^{-1} torr.

60. (Previously presented) A structure as in Claim 49 wherein the inert gas comprises at least one of (a) helium at a partial pressure of no more than 1×10^{-1} torr, (b) neon at a partial pressure of no more than 5×10^{-2} torr, (c) argon at a partial pressure of no more than 1×10^{-2} torr, (d) krypton at a partial pressure of no more than 5×10^{-3} torr, and (e) xenon or radon at a partial pressure of no more than 1×10^{-3} torr.

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61. (New) A structure comprising:

an electron-emitting device which comprises a backplate and an array of laterally separated electron-emissive regions situated over the backplate, each electron-emissive region comprising at least one electron-emissive element;

a light-emitting device coupled to the electron-emitting device to form a hermetically sealed enclosure through which electrons emitted by the electron-emissive regions pass to strike the light-emitting device and cause it to emit light that produces an image;

inert gas located in open space of the sealed enclosure at a partial pressure of at least 5×10^{-7} torr; and

a reservoir for supplying further inert gas to the open space of the sealed enclosure, the reservoir comprising at least one piece of inert-gas compound material.

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